

***Omnibus legislation will include new long-awaited wilderness on Mt. Hood***

Washington, DC – Today, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) led Oregon's Democratic House Reps. in urging colleagues to support S. 22, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act. The House is scheduled to vote this week on this bill which contains numerous public lands provisions for Oregon, including the Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness Act that has been awaiting Congressional action for several years. U.S. House Reps. Peter De Fazio, Kurt Schrader, and David Wu joined Blumenauer in sending the attached letter to members of the House today.

"For the past six years members of Oregon's congressional delegation, hundreds of constituents, numerous organizations and agencies, local governments and Tribal leaders have worked tirelessly to pass these wilderness provisions through the Senate," said Rep. Blumenauer. "That's why I am pleased to be joined by my Oregon democratic colleagues in urging members of the House to pass this bill to President Obama without delay. Oregonians should not have to wait for 20 more years to see our state's natural beauty protected and preserved for generations to come."

In 2003, Blumenauer convened the first of a series of annual Mt. Hood Summits. In 2006, he partnered with the Oregon House delegation members to pass the Mt. Hood Stewardship Legacy Act, which was the first new Oregon wilderness expansion to pass either chamber of Congress in 20 years.

The Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness Act protects almost 127,000 acres around Mount Hood with wilderness protection and adds almost 80 miles on nine free-flowing stretches of rivers to the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Other Oregon provisions included in the bill are detailed below:

- The Cascade Siskiyou National Monument Voluntary and Equitable Grazing Conflict Resolution Act, which establishes a 23,000-acre wilderness area, to be known as the Soda Mountain Wilderness, in the Monument's southern backcountry;
- The Oregon Badlands Wilderness Act, which designates almost 30,000 acres of wilderness 15 miles east of Bend. The wilderness designation comes over two decades after the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recommended the area be preserved;
- The Spring Basin Wilderness Act, which designates approximately 8,600 acres of BLM land as the Spring Basin Wilderness, overlooking the John Day Wild and Scenic River. The area is important habitat for populations of Mule Deer, Rocky Mountain Elk and many bird

species, and offers recreational opportunities for hikers, horseback riders, hunters, botanists and other outdoor enthusiasts;

- The Copper Salmon Wilderness Act, which designates 9.3 miles of rivers at the headwaters of the North Fork of the Elk River as Wild and Scenic and adds 13,700 acres of new wilderness adjacent to the existing Grassy Knob Wilderness. The Elk River is known as the most productive wild salmon and steelhead river of its size in the lower 48 states.

For Immediate Release

February 9, 2009

Media Contact: Sahar Wali

202-225-8413 Office/202-834-6919 Cell

Sahar.wali@mail.house.gov